

Repression

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Summary: Isaac, after the ravages that was Vale, sets out to repair broken houses as well as broken relationships. But an enigmatic disease stuns him unexpectedly as he fights his way to bring back what was lost.. and what was never his.

***Chapter 1*: Almost Dusk**

A/N Hi, thanks for taking notice of my small fic over here. I'm not really that much of a writer, plus English is not really my preferred language... so I could only hope it's good enough.

And, yeah, this is mudshipping. I know it's not canon. And that's why I've decided to write about it, not being canon and all that. :)

Enjoy!

Chapter I - Almost Dusk

The unusually harsh gusts of wind scattered in Isaac's room, knocking down his familiar artifact, the once famous '*Sol Blade*'. It was quite a gloomy morning for springtime, as Isaac, still half-asleep, was awakened by the noise his sword made... and probably the loud voice of Gareth, chatting with his mom just outside their temporary home in Kalay. After all, the ravages that was once *Vale* was beyond repair. And now, the previous residents sought refuge amongst the neighboring Kalay and Vault.

He lifted the feeling of fatigue as he rose from his bed. Sluggishly, he had a change of clothes before going down the creaky, wooden stairs to see what's with the commotion outside. Quiet mornings are slowly turning out to be a thing of the past in Isaac's book.

"Morning, mum." Isaac partially raised his right hand up in greeting and smiled. "Who were you talking with, earlier? I thought I heard Gareth's voice." He covered his mouth after

he yawned, remembering Dora's long and harsh lectures about proper manners.

Dora comically pointed at the fleeting image of Gareth, already at the horizon, running. "He was apologizing this earliest of mornings." she giggled, making fun of Gareth's reaction to Isaac's footfalls down the stairs. "He told me he had other 'stuff' to do so he can't go with you to Imil today."

Isaac had his eyebrows crossed after a painfully lame excuse. "Stuff?" He sarcastically asked.

"Oh, don't take it so hard, dear. You know Gareth. He always has stuff to do." She gently pinched Isaac's shoulder. "You don't really need to go to Imil at once, dear. You can wait 'til Gareth settles whatever it is, so - *cough, cough....* erhm."

The dreaded sound of his mom's sickness was clearly heard while Isaac silently clenched his fists and looked away. They were supposed to go to Imil for the precious Herme's Water, a possible remedy for her condition. And now the trip is on the verge of being postponed, he couldn't help but feel responsible if his mom's illness gets worse.

"I have to leave today, Ma. It's for your own sake." Isaac uttered with pleading eyes directly at her, begging to go to Imil. He slowly turned his back on her as she made his way towards their house.

"Oh hush, Isaac." Dora suddenly quipped. "You just want to see that pretty girl, hmm, what was her name?.. Oh, that's right - Mia! Now I get it.."

He was quickly stopped in his tracks. Feeling a bit ashamed that Mia, the azure-haired girl that amazingly aided them in their quest, was really part of his trip to Imil, Isaac was quick

to defend himself while trying hard not to show the tinge of red, blossoming up in his cheeks.

"Mom, I'm doing this for you! And how many times do I have to tell you that we're just friends?"

Dora simply laughed. "Isaac, you're my son. I know when you're telling the truth, and I know when you're telling something else. Okay? And besides, I know you're tired of all the rebuilding that's happening here so take this opportunity to rest up."

Isaac knew her mom was right. She's right about him being tired, fatigued and all that, and she's right that Mia is a darn good reason reason that drives him to make the trip this instant.

Hours after breakfast, the clouds are still looming aimlessly at the concrete colored skies above Kalay. Though, it's a usual morning for the residents, bar the weather - carpentry was most noticeable in the outskirts where Kyle and his family lives, and add the many refugees of Vale. It seemed to be another normal day for everyone, except Isaac.

"Mom, Dad, I'm leaving." he shouted in a dignified tone. He looked towards the direction of his parents, who were sitting down before the dinner table, talking. "I brought plenty of vials and containers for the water so we'd have backups of supply in the event that we need it again."

Isaac, eager to start his travel, rushed to his mom and dad to give them an assuring hug. It seems like the tragic events that happened from a year ago taught Isaac how fragile and uncertain a human's life is. At one point of his life, he believed that his father was crushed by a titanic boulder that fell from Mt. Aleph, and now, being with his whole

family after a string of fated events makes him feel that he was reborn of some sort - miraculously erasing nightmares from the past.

Dora took long enough to let go from her son's embrace. "I told you earlier, Isaac, you don't really have to leave today." Dora grumbled. "You're just as stubborn as your father."

"Hey, don't drag me into this." His father hastily commented.

Isaac lets out a deep sigh, an eerie mix of sadness, fatigue and uncertainty. "I'm gonna be alright. I'll make sure that I'm back after 3 days... Make that 2 days if I happen to hitch a ride from caravans." he said with a playful, but forced grin. But as he was opening the door, Kyle suddenly spoke with a fatherly tone and called his attention.

"Son, are you sure you're ready? .. and not forgetting anything?" He stood up and slowly walked in Isaac's direction.

Isaac wondered what his dad was talking about. "Of course, I'm ready, Dad. And what am I forgetting? I think I brought my *Catch Beads* this time..." he sarcastically replied.

Kyle glanced at his wife and both of them shook their head in a worried manner.

"Your Sol Blade. You left it upstairs. It's not like you to forget an essential tool." he reminded his bewildered son.

Reaching for his back where his blades are usually strapped, he realized that, indeed, he failed to notice that it was missing. Painting an appalled face, up he goes, to his room while trying to figure out why he forgot his trusty weapon. As his dad said, it's not like Isaac, the lad that tends to

remember even trivial matters, irresponsibly go out to the wilderness without a tool to protect him.

Upstairs, while he was desperate to find out the reason for his unusual memory gap, a bizarre predicament ensued.

Out of nowhere, a sudden jolt of pain hammered his head. It was so intense that it floored him the moment it struck, as he gripped his head with his two hands in agony. His eyes were shut tight but vivid, distorted images were flashing vigorously in his mind. And when the pain finally subsided, all he could do was stand up, breathe heavily, and ponder what the hell just happened.

"What on heavens just happened? It's as if someone with a tremendous level of psyenergy casted Mindbreaker on me."

Isaac didn't dwell that long after the pain was magically gone, like someone or something stopped channeling a destructive spell directed in his mind. Nevertheless, he picked up his sword, strapped it on his back and slowly headed downstairs again.

"I'm leaving.. for the second time." Isaac muttered before dashing out, probably to avoid another setback from his parents... or worse - a sermon. His parents could only watch from afar. His steadfast words and unfaltering perseverance to go to Imil was unquestionable - but his frail and overworked body is.

Dusk was on its way to settle in, as the afternoon heat slowly fades away. The pink glow of the sky struck the dusty road to Vault, languidly wavering as the hours move on.

It was getting dark.

Isaac smartly took the main road, though longer, to avoid the stray and not to mention aggressive creatures around. And after a peaceful but physically challenging travel, he finally saw Vault in the horizon.

He gingerly wiped the sweat on his forehead with his yellow scarf and continued to tread the path towards the town. His every step drained bits of energy from his already tired frame, and when he actually arrived in the town, he was dying for an elixir or two. It wasn't really long ago since he last came to these familiar sceneries and surely enough, he still knew the place quite well. Any refreshments would do, really, but there's a certain store here that he remembers from his travels and Isaac's clearly a patron of the said establishment.

He quickly went to the small boutique for supplies and beverages and planned to spend the night at the local inn, where Isaac, Garet and Ivan were still considered heroes after catching the thieves.

Man, it feels like ages since I've been here.

He stood outside the cheeky looking store as memories of their travels erupted like a silent stream. His golden hair was leisurely stroked with his tired hand, maybe a gesture of waking up from his reverie, and finally barges in the front door.

A familiar scent tickled his senses.

Hovering at the fine quantities of beverages the store offers, he was quick to spot his favorite herbal tea and rashly decided that he'd buy 2 so he won't worry about his almost insatiable thirst when walking.

To the counter he goes, balancing his drinks while at the same time, trying to shovel some change in his pocket. And then it hit him. And the hit was darn hard.

That familiar scent.

Those glowing turquoise locks.

And her pair of mesmerizing sapphire eyes.

His heart skipped a beat, as if an angel from heavens shrouded him with an aura of epiphany.

"...Mia?"

.. and it only took a quick, but solemn glance, and all the familiar warm sensations came rushing back in.

***Chapter 2*: Edelweiss**

A/N Hi, sorry for the late update. I've been lacking inspiration, as others may say.

I try to work hard on this fic because the GS community is awesome.. pardon me if it's not good enough. :P

Anyway.. without further delay, here's Chapter 2!

Chapter II - Edelweiss

The night was young but the pitch black sky already enveloped the land. The cold *North Wind* howls, scattering the dry leaves afloat and making the stagnant water flicker. Oddly enough, it was supposed to be the first days of spring, but much more it resembled the unpredictable *Imilian* autumn as the sands drop by the hourglass.

But no matter how strong the wind blows, it would still have an inevitable direction: To go forward.

A round glass window in the small shoppe burst open after it was pummeled by a freak squall. The cold, numbing gust flew inside, chilling everyone in the vicinity of the store. Isaac instinctively covered his face with his free hand, and after the mischievous and playful wind receded, the first thing he thought to fix his eyes on was Mia.

Mia.

Against the strong gust, her pale blue hair fluttered like an angel's wing in flight.

And fated as it may seem, their eyes met. His suppressed feelings for the *Mercury Adept* were free-flowing again, like a

water reservoir whose floodgates were unlocked with exuberance. One glance from her was all it took to ignite the past sentiments ablaze, and effectively douse the shackles of fear that was holding him back for the longest of times.

Mia timidly stroked her wind-swept hair. Though seemingly bashful from finally meeting him after a lengthy while, she was the first to clear the awkward silence and gently muttered "I..Isaac.. I d-didn't imagine seeing you here." She fidgeted her sky blue cleric uniform, trying to unnerve herself from the rare, but awkward, situation they were both in.

Her soft and gentle voice reminded him of the days she was taking care of his wounds; she was always there to lend a hand and a healing spell.

Never mind his sentiments, he was too nervous to reply properly. "I know.. I-It's been a while.. Mia." Isaac shrugged his trembling legs off and slowly stepped forward. "Uhm, so how are you, Mia?" He reaches out his free hand, showing a gesture of a handshake.

Trying hard not to show that her palms were shaking too, she hesitantly reached out a hand and shook Isaac's, while nodding timidly. "I've been alright.. So, how's the rest of the gang? Madam Dora, Garet and-" she evidently clears her throat and looked away, blushing, while she continued. "..and, uhm.. Jenna?" Their hands parted ways, shortly after.

Though Mia was expecting a change of emotion on his face, Isaac replied, unflinching. "They're alright.. Still a quirky neighborhood, I guess.. Which reminds me - I traveled to Vault for some, uhm, Hermes Water.." He gulped hard, and started feeling a little bit of irresponsibility on his side. "My

mom has a mild illness.. And I thought the *water* would be a good remedy for it."

All of a sudden, she crossed her arms and pouted. "Oh no.. That's unfortunate..." Her face showed a hint of dissatisfaction.

Isaac was quick to explain the situation. "H-hey, no, she's alright, it's actually nothing serious!" His eyes were flared up and apologizing.

"I-I, I had some Hermes Water earlier.. but, see, I used it already.." Mia translated her worries. It seemed to be just a little misunderstanding for the two. "I went here for healing duties, after all.. Maybe we can go get some, together..?" And after she realized that she had just invited him on a journey together, Mia blushed profusely and was quick to patch things up. ".. if that's okay with you.." she added.

"That'd be great, Mia!" Isaac burst in joy, though he got a little bit embarrassed shortly after. "Ehrm, yeah, I'm okay with that. Besides, if ever we encounter some wild creature or something..." Isaac, shifting his eyes from one place to another, suddenly fixed a glance at her. His cobalt eyes reflected his fierce determination he showed ever since they were burdened with the quest to save Weyard. "...I'll do my best to protect you."

It was as if a paintbrush streamed scarlet across Mia's cheeks, she hastily turned sideways and tried to regain her composure. "..T-Thanks.. Just like.. the good ol' days, huh.." She bashfully nodded. Mia still couldn't hide her repressed admiration from him; Isaac was always polite, always sacrificing.

But then, an awkward bout of silence passed. Isaac's eyes were still focusing on one object to another, Mia on the other

hand, has her gaze steady at the sturdy wooden floor of the small boutique.

It took a while before Isaac realized that he hasn't paid for his stuff yet. Opening the *Iron Curtain* that enveloped them for a moment, he spoke up about getting his favorite beverage and proceeded to the counter. Meanwhile, Mia offered to wait for him outside.

"I'll just wait for by the door outside, okay?" Mia gently nodded. Her smile was brighter than ever.

"Don't worry. I'll be there in a second." Isaac smiled, and then, walked to the young lass over the counter, while Mia going her way outside. A strong feeling burns inside the two after they briefly parted, that after this short ordeal, they will be together again. It'll just be a quick minute before the two souls, longing for each other, again entwine their paths.

He leaned over and briskly placed the two vials of herbal tea on the polished rosewood counter.

The cashier prompted a question on him. "Is that all for today, Sir?" she said, in a light and cheerful tone.

"Yes, please." his answer was short and direct, a little bit frustrated that he couldn't get his coins from his deep pocket.

Upon hearing that, she turned around and browsed the store's product catalog, then calculated the total price for Isaac's stuff. "It's a total of 50 coins, Sir." And after he handed his his change to her, she proceeded in counting it and afterwards, gave the correct change to him.

"Thank you, Sir. Have a good night." She gently smiled again.

"Thank you." He nodded, obviously very excited to rush outside the store and be with her, again.

However, the cashier was quick to quip. "*Go get her!*" Out of nowhere, she flashed a carefully played wink towards him.

He turned his eyes away in embarrassment and furiously blushed. Immediately, he fixed his gaze to an empty flowerpot with a seemingly fertile soil in it. His face brightened; an idea has just crossed his mind. With a stern concentration and a flick of a hand, he invoked a spell. And in the blink of an eye, an elegant white flower sprouted from the once empty pot.

Growth.

There it sprouted; a rare flower that only thrives in the cold mountains of Imil. His memory began to seep back to the past, where he clearly pictured Mia admiring this certain white flower called '*Edelweiss*'. It was the moment that stroked his feelings into liking her. Her pure and noble smile, her delicate blue eyes, and her unfaltering compassion - just some of the puppeteers that pulled his heart's strings towards hers.

Whilst his left arm was holding a bag of the beverages, his free arm was, again, pressed to his forehead as he chuckled. Their quest in saving *Weyard* was already finished but his pursuit of her heart was nowhere near the final frontier. *How ironic.*

With an admiration to the enticing specimen, he dropped to his knees and prudently picked up the flower. The scent it gave off was just as sublime as its façade.

"..Mia...UGGHH-"

All of a sudden, he felt a puncturing pain in his head that grew stronger.. and stronger and stronger. And just seconds after the initial sting, it felt like his head was an anvil being mauled by Thor's hammer. That dreadful, enigmatic affliction struck Isaac again. In his mind were bright and hazy images flashes robustly, to an extent that it breaks your mind from too much. And again, the pain subsided. No aftershock like an earthquake, he felt unusually fine again.

He gasped heavily. The obscure occurrence still remains a mystery to him. On the floor, he noticed a bag with two vials of beverage that he likes. And disturbingly enough, he rushed back to the counter and uttered the most nonsensical phrase to the girl in the counter.

"Hi.. How much for these two?" he said, in the most natural of voices. And trying to shove the non-existent change in his pocket, in which he already handed to the cashier earlier.

The young lass was unsurprisingly bewildered. *Hasn't he paid for it already?* She replied, with the question in her mind. "Uhm.. You already paid for it, minutes ago. Is there something wrong?"

"Really? Well, if you say so... I'd be best on my way, then." Clearly, Isaac was amused by her answer and he probably thinks the girl let her go, or she could've knew him from before - they were Vault's heroes not long ago, anyway. Nonetheless, could it possibly be another *lapse* from his troubled mind? Is it from the fatigue, maybe?

Isaac strolled towards the door and went out. And moments after he left, the girl noticed something unusual in her sights.

"An *Edelweiss*?" she thought. "Did he leave it here?.. It doesn't make sense... I guess I could keep it, then."

The girl gingerly picked up the pristine flower and carefully pressed it between the pages of a thick book. After that, she held her hands and clasped the book shut. Most likely, she knows that this is an excellent way to preserve flora and keep it's natural beauty intact. The girl deeply sighed and momentarily paused, looking lost in her reverie. And she muttered in her thoughts: '*What a pretty flower. I'll make sure it won't go to waste.*'

***Chapter 3*: Blame it on the Rain**

A/N Sorry for the slow update. Responsibilities have been catching up lately.. so yeah.

Thanks for all the reviewers! You've made me work harder than ever..

Without further ado (yes, cliché, I know), here's Chapter III.

Chapter III - Blame it on the Rain

The crisp sound of his leather boots on dew laden grass was the only note that separated a tranquil evening and an eerie spell of silence. Every step he took was filled with turbulence. Every breath that escaped his quivering lips were of heavy tone. And his terrified grip on the vial of tea was strained more and more, as he took strides down the outskirts of *Vault*. Isaac came across a familiar stream that lies before the mouth of the *Goma* cave. The clear, sparkling water reflected the bright moon, a phase away from shining to its fullest, and the formidable clouds looming near. With a solemn aura, he carried himself onto an elevated part of the entrance and sat down.

He knew something was wrong... something in him was terribly wrong.

Contrary to the unacceptable weather earlier, the night unexpectedly turned out to be at a standstill, despite some clouds forming above. The serene environs only suggest that the constant tantrums of the squalls and gusts came to a halt. The surroundings were pleasant enough to ignite the deep soul searching he urgently longed for.

Ever since he left the small shop, a certain feeling of void and desolation surrounded him. The only clear thing in his mind was the fact that something was forcefully taken from his memories, and it's obvious that he knows nothing about it. It only leaves him with a sinking feeling whenever he tries to grasp the enigmas that has been attacking him recently.

And so, he took the leisure of leaving the inn he stayed with Mia to look for answers.

He stood up and pondered. Isaac closed his eyes and became silent.

The beat of the crushing waves of the waterfalls nearby made him remember his travels down the *Mid-Eastern region of Angara*, most distinctively in *Fuchin Temple*. The head monk, Nyunpa, passed him a great knowledge about psyenergy which was confirmed by Master Hama and the martial artists of *Xian* - *that Ki, or Psyenergy, is the power of the mind and is based on the memory and capacity of the mind*.

He seized the streams of his thoughts and mused rather aimlessly, finding the threads that weave his mind's malicious ailment, and of course, the affliction's relationship with psyenergy, a privilege that he used and relied massively.

The North Wind heaved once again, striking the sleeping trees and turning the leaves into a melody of the ocean. The sound it made mimics the crashing of the waves at the oceanside.

Trying to reunite the fragments of his memories from the void only caused him more distress. He cried in pain as he suffers within the confinement of his mind, but still, he forged on and hustled his mind for answers.

Something's missing.. A part of it doesn't make sense at all.. But what did I do? Is there anything I did that could've triggered the - Ah! Growth! It couldn't have been anything else!

He vaguely grasped it.

Brimming with excitement, but yet, dragged down by the fear of the truth, Isaac scaled down and trekked towards an acquainted shrub, probably from his past adventures. He settled down on the quiet grass - the plant in front of him never did grew bigger.

Isaac calmed his thoughts and concentrated. Both of his arms were held up towards the direction of the shrub.

Briar.

The sullen ambiguity of the night was swiftly broken by the rampaging totems of destructive thorns, rooting beneath the humble plant and growing explosively towards the sky. The dark green pillars were already taller than him but his channeling of the spell didn't falter - instead, he only pushed it further, and further.. until what he was seeking for came knocking on his door.

He dropped to his knees; the cylinders of thorns already thrice his prominence. The excruciating pain that he suffered before struck back, but with more strain and intensity, gripping his head with an iron whip. His eyes shriveled in agony and disbelief, exposing the bulging blood vessels that screams torment. The gnashing of his teeth was almost audible, and his palms tried to grasp the ground that keeps him upright.

Isaac cried in great pain, as his voice resonated throughout the empty area. No one heard his plea of help. But still, the

attack in his mind blazed on.

He clutched his head with his two stiff arms; his body was splashing on the ground like a fish out of water. His blood vessels were throbbing by the great pressure thrown out by his troubled heartbeat. He couldn't take no more.

Down the bank of the stream, he collapsed.

Darkness. My eyes have gone bad.

Floating. A feeling of floating.

Peace. Have my ears failed me, already?

The harsh cold air. Is this the end?

Water. Droplets of water.

Am I drowning?

No. I'm not.

It's just a droplet.

It's just..

"...raining.."

The echoes of rain slowly crept into his consciousness as he gradually regained his hearing. His whole body was cold and drenched; his golden locks were a complete mess. Void of energy, Isaac tried moving his right arm only to be impeded with a slap of an acute headache momentarily.

An unfamiliar ceiling caught his blank glare - t'was all stone.

Still unable to stand up, he looked around the environs. There was a small campfire nearby, maybe half a yard away, and his upper garments lying beside it. The whole scenario continued to baffle him, and unfortunately, nothing registered in his memory no matter how hard he tried to remember.

What the hell happened?

With a blank face out of frustration, he closed his eyes and tried calming himself, hoping that somehow, he will decipher what's going on. He slowly turned his heavy gasps into calm breaths; he could only hear the torrents of rain outside and the crackles of firewood of the campfire within. Isaac soothed himself to sleep.

It has been long minutes since he was asleep, yet the rain never ceased, nor showed signs that it was ready to stop.

A warm touch and a familiar fragrance crawled through his senses. He felt a soothing heat enveloping his left cheek, a soft and gentle touch, it seems. His eyes, though only half-open, couldn't have been wrong. Those almost sapphire-colored hair stood out from the bland palettes of the environs.

It was an unexplainable happiness that woke him up inside. "Mia.. why are you here?" he quickly asked, though he doesn't really care why. It's a blessing enough to be graced by her presence on these tragic encounters.

Her hand that held a vial of *aloe vera* trembled upon hearing those words. "You don't remember, Isaac?"

Seemingly stunned by her blunt riposte, he crossed his eyebrows in bewilderment. "What do you mean? I'm sorry but.. I really couldn't remember anything that could've lead you here. Ugh.. Heck I don't even know why I'm here in the first place.." Although hurting, he pushed himself in a sitting position, right across her. "What happened? My head hurts when I try to think about it.. I'm sorry."

Mia, painting worried eyes, hurried and grabbed a piece of paper from her small rucksack and handed it to Isaac. "Here. You gave me this after we booked our rooms." she bit her lip and stayed quiet as he prepared to read the letter.

Mia,

Something's bothering me at this moment. It's not a grave thing so you need not be worried.

I will be leaving for the mouth of the Goma cave, just for a breath of fresh air. But if ever I'm still out when it strikes 10, would you be so kind and look after me? Sorry to trouble you with these trivialities.

- Isaac

He clutched the piece of paper with his fists, crumpling it in annoyance.

Why? Why couldn't I remember anything? This is my handwriting but the words doesn't make sense..

Isaac shook his head, disappointed and lost. And he turned his vision to Mia; troubled and disgruntled. "Sorry. This is my handwriting .. but I can't remember ever writing this at all." A deep sigh from him was heard afterwards.

"Memory loss?" She seemed to be contemplating something, as she looked away and clasped her misty hands. "Uhm, I saw a handiwork of Venus Psyenergy near the stream. Do you think it could've been you who invoked it?... If you can't remember anything, don't push yourself." Mia seems to follow a vague trail of reasoning as he asked him.

"I do remember casting Briar.. but to be honest, that's the only thing I could pull out from my mind right now." A fleeting sensation of pain struck him as he forged further. Isaac grit his teeth in agony. "Ughh...Sorry. My head hurts when I try to think about it.. but it still eludes me."

By his surprise, Mia had a change of expression. She went ahead and sat beside him, just inches separating their drenched bodies apart; then looking straight at his eyes with her own, pleading and comforting. "Isaac, you need to rest for now. Let's talk about what happened tomorrow, okay?"

"Yeah. I guess it's no use." Isaac tried to look away. A feeling of guilt chained his breathing into a heavy gasp - she was soaked from the terrible downpour. "Thanks.. Even though it was pretty bad outside, you still came looking for me. I know that water is nothing to you, for an adept who controls it.. but still..." Isaac ran out of words and ended his statement, gulping a big knot down his throat.

Mia stared blankly at the fire nearby, intensely blazing and illuminating the otherwise dark cavern. "You know, Isaac, it might be funny and unusual.. but for a Mercury Adept, I never really liked the rain." she revealed.

Baffled by her words, he quickly focused his eyes on her and replied "Really?"

Mia bent over and hugged her legs; her bashful eyes still gazed at the warm fire. "Yeah.. Since I was a child, I've always thought that the rain brings sickness.. and pain. I guess that's why I'm scared of it." She shyly giggled and buried her face between her thighs.

He was clearly lost, but still he's at his wits. "I've always embraced the rain as a blessing.. You know, watering the plants and bringing good harvests for people. Besides, rain

is normal; it's nature's mechanism that we can't really do anything about, but oblige.. But, hey, that's just me. " Clearly, Isaac thinks otherwise.

Mia nodded. "That's true.. that's why travelling with you, I've learned something important about the rain."

With questioning eyes, he looked at her.

"..that the rain.. You can feel it, but you can't stop it." Mia broke her long stare at the fire and shifted her gaze to him. "I guess the rain doesn't bother me anymore.. and I think I'm starting to like it." She placed the most exuberant of smiles towards him. "If going through the downpour will make Isaac happy, then I'd gladly do it."

"And you actually did, huh?" He could've sworn that he saw Mia giggle. And now, it was Isaac's turn to stare languidly on the vivid fire.

Both of them shared the warmth of each other's company, eagerly dreaming on the burning sensation in close proximity, but equally calmed by the heavy cloudburst outside. It wasn't the oppressive silence that surrounded them; it was a deep and peaceful understanding beyond words that effectively shut out all the noise, only permitting the faint heartbeats of the two in melody.

"The rain doesn't seem like stopping soon.. so, I think we're stuck here for the rest of the night." Mia somewhat summed up a flurry of an evening.

Isaac, oblivious and almost nonchalant, moved closer until he was merely centimeters away from her. Mia wasn't hostile about it, seeing how she relieved her tight embrace on her legs and slightly faced her body towards him. And then, he

made a decision; an answer to Mia's uncertainties for the night.

"Well, I guess.. we can blame it on the rain."

Mia nodded, as she placed her hands over his. "Yeah..It's all because of the rain." she uttered with a smile.